

## Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PRS-01 SCS-03 SCA-01 L-03 H-03 SS-20

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S/PRS - MR. KING (INFO)

NEA/INS - MR. LORTON

SCA/SCS - MR. LIVORNESE (INFO)

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA IMMEDIATE

INFO AMCONSUL MADRAS

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

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E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, IN

SUBJECT: PRESS GUIDANCE

REF: NEW DELHI 10421

1. IN ANTICIPATION QUERIES ON HARCOS-FLETCHER AT NOON  
PRESS BRIEFING AUGUST 6 FOLLOWING GUIDANCE WAS PREPARED:

QUOTE: Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE  
HEALTH OF THE TWO AMERICANS IN JAIL IN CALCUTTA?

A. MR. HARCOS AND MR. FLETCHER HAVE BEEN ON A HUNGER  
STRIKE SINCE JUNE 17. OUR MOST RECENT REPORT SAID THAT  
HARCOS HAD LOST 20 POUNDS AND FLETCHER 19 POUNDS SINCE THE  
HUNGER STRIKE BEGAN. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THEY HAVE BEEN  
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TAKING SOME NOURISHMENT.

Q. WHEN WERE HARCOS AND FLETCHER LAST SEEN BY A CONSULAR OFFICER?

A- HARCOS AND FLETCHER HAVE BEEN VISITED REGULARLY BY A REPRESENTATIVE OF OUR CONSULATE GENERAL IN CALCUTTA. THE LAST VISIT WAS AUGUST 5; ANOTHER IS SCHEDULED FOR TODAY. THEY LOOKED WELL, ALTHOUGH PALE AND THINNER THAN WHEN THEY BEGAN THE HUNGER STRIKE ON JUNE 17. BOTH PRISONERS ARE STILL ACCEPTING NASAL FORCED FEEDING.

Q. WHAT IS THE STATUS OF THEIR CASES?

A. YOU KNOW THAT THEY WERE ARRESTED ON APRIL 26, 1973, AND HAVE RETAINED COUNSEL. PRE-TRIAL PROCEEDINGS HAVE BEGUN IN CALCUTTA AND A TRIAL JUDGE HAS BEEN NAMED. A TRIAL DATE HAS NOT YET BEEN SET ALTHOUGH WE HAVE REPEATEDLY URGED THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA TO SCHEDULE A PROMPT TRIAL FOR THE TWO MEN.

Q. ARE THE PAIR IN ANY WAY AFFILIATED WITH THE U.S. GOVERNMENT? THE IMPLICATION IS THAT THE TWO WERE SPIES FOR THE U.S.

A. NEITHER HARCOS NOR FLETCHER HAS ANY CONNECTION OF ANY SORT WITH THE U.S. GOVERNMENT.

Q. WHAT COMMENT DO YOU HAVE ON THE REPORTED STATEMENT OF AN AMERICAN OFFICIAL THAT THEIR DETENTION WITHOUT THE FILING OF CHARGES IS AN "OUTRAGE."

A. I HAVE NO COMMENT ON THAT SPECIFIC PERSONAL JUDGMENT. BUT I WILL SAY THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT REMAINS CONCERNED ABOUT THIS CASE. AMBASSADOR MOYNIHAN HAS TALKED TO THE INDIAN FOREIGN SECRETARY SINGH ON THE MATTER, AND DURING HIS RECENT VISIT HERE HE ALSO SPOKE TO INDIAN AMBASSADOR KAUL ABOUT THE CASE. BESIDES THAT THE OFFICIALS OF THE DEPARTMENT HAVE BEEN IN CONTACT WITH BOTH AMBASSADOR KAUL AND HIS SUBORDINATES ABOUT A PROMPT DISPOSITION OF THE CASE.

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Q. DO WE KNOW ANYTHING MORE ABOUT THE CHARGES UNDER WHICH THE MEN WILL BE TRIED?

A. WE HAVE REPEATEDLY SAID WE CANNOT COMMENT ON ANY CHARGES WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN MADE PUBLIC, BUT LAWYERS FOR THE TWO MEN HAVE SAID THEY WERE ENGAGED IN DRUG SMUGGLING.  
END QUOTE.

2. NO QUERIES ON HARCOS-FLETCHER WERE RAISED AT AUGUST 6  
BRIEFING. LENGTHY AUGUST 6 NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE ON  
HARCOS FLETCHER BY WEINRAUB BEING CARRIED ON WIRELESS  
FILE.

3. DECLASSIFY DECEMBER 31, 1974, OR WHEN RELEASED. KISSINGER

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